

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGUI 01630 031546Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00

NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

SCS-03 SCA-01 PC-01 AID-05 SY-05 IGA-02 CU-02

/097 W

-----064281 031550Z /46

O R 031330Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9028

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

USUN NEW YORK 369

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGUI 1630

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CT, US

SUBJ: US-CAE RELATIONS

REF: BANGUI 1616, BANGUI 1614, STATE 181732

1. AS I SUGGESTED BANGUI 1616 AND BANGUI 1614, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT BRITISH ENGAGE THEMSELVES IN GOLDSMITH DETENTION CASE MORE ACTIVELY AND CONSIDER SOME FORM OF CONCILIATORY GESTURE. BOKASSA IS A CORNERED MAN, WHO IS LIKELY TO REACT DEFENSIVELY AND WITH HOSTILITY TO OUTSIDE PRESSURES. IF HE THOUGHT WE WERE USING EITHER MOBUTU OR HOUPHOUET FOR THIS PURPOSE IT IS MY VIEW THAT HE WOULD DIG IN HIS HEELS. MOBUTU IN PARTICULAR IS UNLIKELY TO BE HELPFUL SINCE GOLDSMITH HAS ALREADY BEEN THROWN OUT OF ZAIRE, AND MOBUTU WOULD PRESUMABLY NOT WISH TO STEP IN TO GET HIM OUT OF HIS PRESENT PREDICAMENT. PARENTHETICALLY, I ALSO DO NOT THINK WE SHOULD  
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PAGE 02 BANGUI 01630 031546Z

STRESS THE JOHNSON FAMILY CONNECTION WITH BOKASSA. HE IS AWARE OF IT AND WILL PRESUMABLY TAKE IT INTO ACCOUNT IN ANY DECISION HE COMES TO, BUT AT THIS STAGE AT LEAST, WE SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO OVERPLAY IT. ONLY IF BOKASSA SEEMED ABOUT TO LASH OUT AT US MISSION OR PROGRAMS IN SUCH A WAY AS TO PREJUDICE CONTINUATION OF OUR RELATIONS WOULD INTERVENTION BY FRIENDLY AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE SUCH AS MOBUTU, HOUPHOUET OR BONGO BE HELPFUL. WE

ARE NOT AT THAT POINT YET.

2. FOR THESE REASONS, I HOPE BRITISH WILL GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO HIGH LEVEL MESSAGE SUGGESTED BANGUI 1614 AND TO POSSIBILITY OF HAVING IT DELIVERED BY SENIOR SPECIAL EMISSARY. AS DEPARTMENT WILL REMEMBER THIS WAS TECHNIQUE WHICH WORKED EXTREMELY WELL LAST YEAR WHEN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH CAE WERE IN TROUBLE AND WHEN AF/C DIRECTOR BUCHANAN BROUGHT PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY KISSINGER TO PRESIDENT BOKASSA. IT IS A TECHNIQUE WHICH WE MAY WISH TO CONSIDER USING AGAIN OURSELVES AT SOME LATER POINT DEPENDING ON HOW PRESENT CRISIS PLAYS ITSELF OUT.

3. WHILE BOKASSA DID NOT GIVE ME ANY INDICATION OF CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR OUR PROGRAMS AND IMPLIED THERE MIGHT BE SOME IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS, WE HAVE SEEN NO EVIDENCE OF INCREASED HARASSMENT OF INDIVIDUAL AMERICANS. OUR WORKING LEVEL CONTACTS ARE GOOD AND THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY ANXIOUS TO WORK WITH US. THE GOCAE HAS SAID NOTHING PUBLICLY ABOUT PCV MAHER'S EXPULSION. AMBASSADOR MAIDOU HAS INDICATED CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR PEACE CORPS; SO HAS FOREIGN MINISTER GBEZERA-BRIA.

4. WHETHER OR HOW BOKASSA TAKES ACTION AGAINST US WILL DEPEND IN PART ON HOW GOLDSMITH/RANDAL'S DETENTION IS PLAYED IN AMERICAN PRESS. BOKASSA IS MORBIDLY SENSITIVE ABOUT ATTACKS ON HIS FAMILY, COMMENTARY ON HIS PERSONAL FINANCES AND REFERENCES TO HIS RISE FROM HUMBLE ORIGINS. IF FUTURE STORIES DWELL ON THESE POINTS  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BANGUI 01630 031546Z

AND ATTRIBUTE COMMENTARY TO ANY ELEMENT OF US PRESENCE, PRIVATE OR OFFICIAL, THEN RETALIATORY ACTION MAY FOLLOW. I HAVE CAUTIONED EMBASSY STAFF AND PCVS TO BE EXTREMELY CIRCUMSPECT IN ANY PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS THEY MAY HAVE WITH CENTRAL AFRICANS ON THESE ISSUES, PARTICULARLY IN NEXT WEEKS WHILE WE ARE ENDEAVORING TO GET GOLDSMITH RELEASED AND OUR RELATIONS BACK ON THE TRACKS.  
QUAINTON

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Reference:** 77 BANGUI 1616, 77 BANGUI 1614, 77 STATE 181732  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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